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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 004022

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, EB/ESC/TFS, TREASURY FOR KRISTEN HECHT

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [KU](#) [KTFN](#)
SUBJECT: TERROR FINANCE: MFA UNSWAYED ON RIHS

REF: KUWAIT 3690

Classified By: Economic Counselor Timothy Lenderking for Reasons 1.4 (b)
) and (d)

¶1. (C) During an October 8 meeting, Econcouns asked MFA Director for Follow-up and Coordination Khalid Al-Maqamis what reaction the MFA had to the latest non-paper concerning the activities of the Islamic Revival and Heritage Society, which Econcouns delivered to Maqamis on September 12 (Ref A).

Maqamis produced two letters the MFA had recently received from Bosnian officials -- allegedly from the Minister of Immigration and from an ex-Prime Minister. Al-Maqamis said the letters were responses to inquiries the MFA had sent regarding the activities of RIHS in Bosnia. The responses, Al-Maqamis said, indicated that RIHS activities in Bosnia were legal and above board. The response from the Bosnian officials, Al-Maqamis said, was "positive, not negative."

¶2. (C) Econcouns countered that the non-papers shared with the MFA all contained details of RIHS involvement in terrorism-related activity in Bosnia, as well as other countries. Al-Maqamis offered that perhaps the U.S. had "wrong information." Econcouns said the U.S. took the evidence seriously and had provided information to the GOK after careful research. Uttering his standard mantra, Al-Maqamis said the GOK would respond formally to U.S. charges against RIHS "as soon as possible."

¶3. (C) Comment: In repeated meetings, Al-Maqamis has made clear that he believes U.S. allegations against RIHS are unsubstantiated. This shows no signs of changing, despite the greater level of detail provided the MFA in the last non-paper. Al-Maqamis has indicated on several occasions that the governments of countries in which RIHS operates -- especially Bangladesh, Albania, and Bosnia -- have not, when approached by the GOK, shown any inclination to support or validate U.S. charges. Absent pressure from those governments in tandem with our own, the GOK seems content to rest on the argument that the U.S. is the only country concerned about RIHS's international activities.

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